

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
UNITED STATES GEOLOGICAL SURVEY
WASHINGTON

Lemhi Range -

October 3, 1911.

Mr. Henry Gannett, Chairman,
United States Geographic Board,
U. S. Geological Survey.

Dear Sir:

In a report on the economic resources of Lemhi County, Idaho, it is desired to designate certain physiographic features by names not now officially recognized.

(The continental divide, from the southern end of Bitter-root Mountains south to Beaver Canyon where the Oregon Short Line crosses it, is a serrate range which rises abruptly 2000 to 5000 feet above the adjacent valleys. Locally and on several maps this is designated either Rocky Mountains or Continental Divide, names which obviously lack in precision. On the other hand, available names for this range are limited. It might be called Big Hole Range from the basin lying east, or Bannock Range from Bannock Pass through which Lewis and Clarke passed and which is now the pass traversed by the Gilmore and Pittsburg railway. The most appropriate name, however, seems to be Lemhi Range, since Lemhi River occupies the most pronounced depression adjacent to it. This is also the name of a pass formerly used by the stage line from Red Rock to Salmon City, and in addition is the name of the old Indian reservation which lies about midway along the range. The only objection

to this name is that a few years ago Mr. Allen Merritt, County Surveyor, applied the name to the range which lies southwest of Lemhi Valley. Although not recognized locally or officially, this application has found a place on several maps of Idaho. Just what inertia would need to be overcome to apply the term to the continental divide, the Geographic Board is better able to judge than I am, although a careful canvass of local opinion strongly favors its application to the mountain range east of Lemhi Valley.

The range west of Lemhi Valley and the one to which Merritt applied the term Lemhi Range is a sharply defined topographic feature bounded on the northeast by Lemhi Valley, on the southeast by Pahsimaroi Valley, and cut across on the northwest by the canyon of Salmon River near Salmon City. Southeastward it gives way by a low pass to a range known as Little Lost River Mountains. In all the range is about 75 miles long and varies in elevation from 8,000 to 10,800 feet. Its isolation and its importance in the economic resources of the county necessitate that a definite name be applied to it. If Lemhi Range be applied to the continental divide as is strongly favored by the writer, it is suggested that this range be named from the valley which lies southwest of it, - Pahsimaroi Range.

Oct. 3, 1911.

The manuscript for this report is completed, and it is respectfully asked that action be taken at as early a date as is possible. The question would have been opened at an earlier date had it not been thought advisable to avail myself of an opportunity to re-canvass local opinion during the field season which has just closed.

Very respectfully,

J. B. Muppleby.

Asst. Geologist.